

Man Behind Paladin Club Murders To Spend Remainder of Life in Prison

Other sentences and convictions obtained for burglary, theft, and fraud charges

Christopher Rivers, the mastermind of the Paladin Club murders that took the lives of his business partner Joseph Connell, and Connell's wife, Olga, was sentenced this morning by New Castle County Superior Court Judge Charles Butler to two terms of natural life in prison, plus 50 years. In April, a jury found Rivers guilty of two counts of Murder First Degree, two counts of Possession of a Firearm During the Commission of a Felony, Conspiracy First Degree, and Criminal Solicitation First Degree. Joseph and Olga Connell were killed outside of their home on Paladin Drive in Wilmington in September 2013. Rivers planned the murders in order to collect on an insurance policy that he and Joseph Connell took on each other in order to protect their business. Deputy Attorneys General Colleen K. Norris, Karin Volker and Jenna Milecki, as well as Kim Moro and Evelyn Smith made up the prosecution team.

Deputy Attorneys General Michael Tipton and Nichole Gannett secured a conviction against Richard Aiken, 52, of Greenwood after a week-long trial. During July 2015, Aiken forcefully entered homes, or was found to be in possession of stolen items from homes, located in the Laurel, Dagsboro and Georgetown areas of Sussex County, many of which were pawned or sold for scrap metal. A Sussex County Superior Court jury found Aiken guilty of two counts of Burglary Second Degree, four Counts of Theft Over \$1500, one count of Theft Under \$1500, two counts of Criminal Mischief Under \$1000, one count of Conspiracy Second Degree, and one count Tampering With a Witness. Aiken will be sentenced in November and faces 16

years to life in prison.

The Medicaid Fraud Control Unit secured a guilty plea from Opra Sadler, 39, of Philadelphia to one count each of Health Care Fraud and Criminal Impersonation. Special Investigator James Armstrong investigated the case and arrested Sadler on March 1, 2016 after a lengthy investigation revealed that Sadler provided home nursing assistant care under a false identity. Sadler, who was previously certified as a nursing assistant in the state but lost her certification due to criminal convictions, provided care to numerous clients of Heartfelt Home Care over the course of a year by impersonating her sister, Dawn Miller, who maintains CNA certification. There were no allegations of substandard care or neglect. She received one year of probation, and will be reported to the Office of the Inspector General for exclusion from participation in all federal health care programs.

Bobbie Johnson, 35, of Milford pled guilty to one count of Falsifying Business Records in Kent County Court of Common Pleas, and was sentenced to probation and restitution of \$583.00. An investigation revealed that Johnson was a personal care aide working in a home, and had billed for services not rendered for three separate periods of time when her patient was an in-patient in a health care facility. A warrant for her arrest was issued in February 2016, but Johnson was not located until DOJ Special Investigator Tom Abram obtained additional leads and tracked her down at a new in-home client's residence, where she was arrested in September.